

DATING NEW ZEALAND MAPS

Postscript from the staff of National Archives

The article "Dating New Zealand maps" by R. P. Hargreaves in the April issue of *NEW ZEALAND LIBRARIES* has drawn appreciation and comment from the staff of National Archives. Mr J. D. Pascoe, Chief Archivist, reports that Messrs J. H. Christie and I. W. Horsfield, and Misses P. S. Cocks and J. S. Hornabrook have all had practical experience in the problems of dating maps, and not least because the map holdings at National Archives are considerable, although not known to Mr Hargreaves.

In many cases the staff may be able to assist with the dating of maps. National Archives holds some of the early records of various departments, including the ubiquitous Public Works Department and the Department of Lands and Survey. Many lithographed maps were used in the Public Works Department as a basis for showing other information. Such superimposed material is often dated; further, the date the document was registered in P.W.D. Plan Records is recorded. Records of the Department of Internal Affairs can serve to fix dates on which various administrative bodies and boundaries were established.

Mr Hargreaves rightly refers to clues from the activity of the author or surveyor of the map. The National Archives staff point out that government maps usually bear the names of the Surveyor-General and other officers (not necessarily the author or surveyor of the map), as well as that of the Government Printer. All these names provide useful clues to the dates of preparation or publication of the map. National Archives can help by ascertaining the period during which an individual held a particular office, not always available in books such as W. R. Jourdain's *Land Legislation and Settlement in New Zealand* (see page 242).

The history and spelling of names of geographic features is often a built-in clue to the age of a map. The Canterbury Rivers Waimakariri and Rakaia were once respectively Courtenay and Cholmondeley; the Mount Tyndall of von Haast roamed the ranges like the ghost of the tramper with no boots at all but finally settled at the head of a branch of the Rangitata; J. T. Thomson's Mount Stokes was altered by lesser explorers to Mount Sefton: these names date a map to within a few years. In some instances the resources of National Archives are able to illustrate the background of the creation of the map and the sequence of subsequent alterations. Printed maps can better be understood if related to reports and working sketches whereby more accurate and authoritative evidence may be produced. In

difficult cases an indirect approach is productive through the use of registers of correspondence, accounting records and general correspondence.

The Chief Archivist and his staff will be very happy to assist Librarians in dating or establishing the source of maps. He is at present negotiating for further accessions of maps* and the staff is continuing with field work in district office records rooms where maps of historic and archival value are waiting appraisal and permanent storage.

* The definition of "Public records" in the interpretation clause of the Archives Act 1957 includes maps and plans; these become "public archives" within the Act when they have ceased to be in current use.

MAP OF NEW ZEALAND

A seven-colour, actual size reproduction of a hand-tinted map of New Zealand from *Tallis's Illustrated Atlas, 1851*.

With coloured border and vignettes of a Maori chief, Auckland, New Plymouth, and Wellington. About 14 x 10 inches.

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